ROYAL ACADEMY PRIZES.

The President and Council of the Royal Academy have announced the following premiums for distribution on the 10th of December next, viz.:—Gold medal and the discourses of the Presidents Reynolds and West, for the best historical picture in oil colours, subject, "Themistocles taking refuge at the Court of Admetus;" the picture to consist of at least three figures; size of the cloth to be a common half-length; the principal figure to be not less than two feet in height. Gold medal and the discourses of the Presidents Reynolds and West for the best composition in sculpture, subject, "The Combat of the Centaurs and Lapithæ," in alto-relievo; the principal figure to be not less than two feet in height. Gold medal and the discourses of the Presidents Reynolds and West, for the best finished designs in architecture; subject, design for a metropolitan Music-hall and Royal Academy of Music; the whole comprised in one general and regular composition; the designs to be as large as an entire sheet of double-elephant will admit, and to consist of plan, elevation, section, and a perspective view. A number of silver medals will be given for the best drawings and models of academy figures, done in the Royal Academy; and for the best accurate finished drawings of the portion of Greenwich Hospital by Inigo Jones, done from actual measurement, carefully finished and washed, as large as a whole sheet of double-elephant will admit, with a rough outline giving the dimensions, attested to be their own performance by any one of the academicians, or any other professor of reputation resident in London. The first medal in each class will be accompanied by a copy of the lectures of Professors Barry, Opie, and Fuseli, handsomely bound. Three silver medals will also be given for the best drawings; and three silver medals for the best models of a statue or group in the Antique Academy, to be selected and set out by the keeper for this purpose. The first medal in each class will be accompanied by copies of the lectures of Professors Fuseli and Opie, handsomely bound. Two silver medals for the best copies made in the School of Painting, between the time of its opening after the exhibition and the 1st of November; the first medal to be accompanied by the lectures of Professors Barry, Opie, and Fuseli, unless the student to whom the premium may be adjudged shall have before acquired them in the Academy. A silver medal will also be given for the best metal die to be cut in steel, from the head of the Belvedere Apollo in the Royal Academy; the size to be not less than one inch and a quarter in diameter, to be accompanied with an impression in wax.

SOCIETY OF ARTS.

The first meeting of the members of the above society, for the present year, was held on the 10th January, in the theatre of the institution, John-street, Adelphi. Dr. Roget, V.P., F.R.S., in the chair.

The secretary (Mr. Whishaw) commenced the proceedings by reading an interesting paper on the very important subject of cleansing the streets of the metropolis. The paper, after dwelling upon the importance in a sanatary point of view of keeping the streets and public thoroughfares in a state of cleanliness and comfort, proceeded to describe the mechanical operations and advantages of the newly-invented street-sweeping and cleansing machines, lately introduced by Messrs. Whitworth and Co., and now daily employed on the wooden pavement at the West-end, under contract with the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and also in Cheapside and the neighbourhood, under contract with the civic authorities. (A very unique model of the machine was placed upon the table.)

Mr. Croucher called the attention of the members to a newly-invented machine for similar purposes, which, he stated, would be brought before the notice of the public in a few days, and which, he had no doubt, would be found equally efficient, and could be worked with a considerable reduction both in labour and cost; it would sweep both longitudinally and transversely, which must be of considerable advantage to wood paving, whilst it was equally applicable to Macadamised or stone pavement.

Mr. Thompson then exhibited his newly-invented apparatus for the preservation of life from fire, the simplicity of which, as a means of escape, added to its cheapness, placed it within the reach of every housekeeper, and which, from its being deposited at the various station-houses, might always be advantageously used by the police.

Mr. Whishaw lastly read a paper on the construction of wooden railways, as being principally applicable as feeders to the great lines of railway. The chief recommendation of the proposed system was that these lines could be constructed at a considerably less cost than the iron rails hitherto in use. It was stated that a trial line had lately been laid down near Vauxhall-bridge, and that the experiments which had been made upon it had been most successful. In consequence of this, it was now proposed that the branch railway from the Woking Station, on the South-Western Railway, to Guildford, should be constructed on this principle.

Votes of thanks were unanimously awarded to the authors of the above-named papers and inventions, with the exception of a person of the name of Mr. Higgins, who appeared in every instance to place himself in collision with all the other members present.

PRIVATE CHAPEL AT WINDSOR.

The Queen's new private chapel at Windsor, consecrated December 19th by the Bishop of Oxford, in the presence of her Majesty, Prince Albert, the Duchess of Kent, and many members of the royal household, has been fitted up in an apartment adjoining St. George's Hall, occasionally also used as a chapel in the reigns of George IV. and William IV. Its extent is about forty feet from north to south, and about thirty feet from east to west; the flat ceiling of the fabric, which is in the form left by Sir Jeffrey Wyatville, is enriched with Gothic mouldings and other decorations. Pendent from the centre of this ceiling is a massive Gothic chandelier for eight lights, of elaborate workmanship, and gilt. The pulpit of carved wainscot is in two stories, the lower one having flying-buttresses and pinnacles: at the angles of its cornice are figures of saints; the reading-desk is in accordance with the pulpit; at the south-west angle of the chapel, opposite the pulpit, is placed her Majesty's closet, in dimensions about eighteen feet long and thirteen feet wide; it is approached from the corridor and private apartments, through the vestibule at the top of the visitors' staircase, at an elevation of ten feet from the floor of the chapel. Behind this apartment is a large Gothic window receiving a subdued light from an outer window, and glazed with stained glass, containing the arms of the Queen and Prince Albert, the garter with its motto, red and white roses, the thistle, the shamrock, and other insignia and decorations. The communion-table is of carved wainscot; the window behind the communion-table, and two other windows at the sides of it, are filled with stained glass of a dark orange colour. On the floor of the chapel, around the south, east, and west sides of it, are seven pews, with fronts of carved wainscot, affording accommodation for fifty or sixty persons; of these seven pews, three are for members of the royal household in attendance upon the Queen and Prince Albert, and the remaining four are for the royal domestics; besides these, six wainscot seats are placed on the floor opposite the communion-table, for upwards of forty servants in livery.

The chapel is warmed by hot air, conveyed from the basement of the castle. In a recess behind the screen on the north side of the chapel, has been erected King George the Third's favourite organ, formerly in the private chapel at Buckingham House, and built by Samuel Green about the year 1770, with one row of keys, and six stops now increased to ten.

Piccadilly Improvements.—The Commissioners of the Woods and Forests, on the meeting of Parliament, intend to apply for a bill to carry into effect the long-projected improvements in the above street. Government, we understand, has offered to pay the whole expense of widening the street from the mansion formerly the Marquis of Hertford's, where the road is only 31 feet wide, to Hamilton-place, taking the ground from the Green-park, and making the whole of a uniform width of 70 feet; and the parishes of St. Martin and St. George are to keep it in repair.—*Standard*.

ETON COLLEGE IMPROVEMENTS.

The architectural improvements now in progress at the College are of a very important character, and seem to bid fair to render this ancient seat of learning as celebrated for its external beauty as its classical renown. Two very spacious and elegant houses, in the Elizabethan style of architecture, are in the course of erection on the site of the mean pile of houses recently razed opposite to the principal entrance to the College. These houses are already sufficiently advanced to enable some opinion to be formed of their external character. We understand that another building, precisely similar in the style of its architecture, will be erected close by in the course of the ensuing summer. The whole are being built by the College. There has also recently been built at the northern end of the long-walk wall, a gateway and a lodge, thus effecting an improvement on the old dead wall which previously existed at this spot. But it has been generally remarked that it is not clear what it is a lodge to. As a lodge it seems misplaced; indeed, it has more the appearance of the *grille* of a cloister. It has a small tower which is octagonal, while every other of the College is square. The lodge runs into, rather than up to, the tower of the head master's chambers, at a very unusual angle, and with a most unpleasing effect. The architect appeared anxious to interfere with this portion of the ancient edifice as little as possible, and has therefore reduced the height of the lodge before it reached the tower. There are great general improvements, however, whatever in some cases may be their defects. We hear that there is a plan in contemplation for materially altering the whole front of this building, so as to harmonize with the simple character of the Long Chamber and the Lower School. A sanatorium for the exclusive use of the Etonians, at Eton-wick, about a mile from the College, is now nearly completed, and also a handsome and spacious hexagonal building, in the immediate vicinity of the College, intended for a mathematical school, and occasionally for the delivery of lectures. In all the extensive improvements now being effected and contemplated, every possible precaution will be taken to secure an effectual drainage and a thorough ventilation of the premises, thus being the means of materially contributing to the general healthfulness and salubrity of the College.

TOMB OF NAPOLEON.

It is the intention of the French government to surround the tomb of Napoleon with a pavement, constructed on the same plan as the famous pavement of the Duomo of Siena, which was designed by Domenico Beccafumi, and executed under his direction, between 1520 and 1550. The construction of this pavement resembles the manufacture called *pietra dura*, a kind of mosaic, in which the figures are composed of pieces of white, black, and grey marble, artificially put together in their natural shades, so as to produce the effect of chiaroscuro. In this material, which, from its gravity and durability, is peculiarly fitted for the architectural decoration of a building devoted to solemn purposes, Beccafumi executed those sublime groups from the Old Testament, which are well known by the fine old wood-cuts and engravings which exist of them. The original cartoons are preserved at Siena. Few, however, have seen the whole of the pavement displayed at once; it is, or was till lately, boarded over to preserve it from injury, and only one or two compartments removed from time to time, to gratify travellers and amateurs. We are not aware that any imitation on a large scale of this colossal work has ever been attempted; the idea, therefore, of surrounding the tomb of Napoleon with a pavement on which the memorable events of his life are to be represented in this grand and imperishable style, appears to us magnificent in taste and spirit. The execution of this national work is confided to M. Henri de Triquetl, the sculptor—an excellent choice—both as regards the talent of the artist and the particular direction of that talent. The characteristics required in such a work belong to sculpture rather than to painting, and those works of M. de Triquetl, already before the public, display such a profound knowledge of art in the abstract, and in his own particular province of art, such a degree of grandeur and

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